

We have had an interesting year. President Clinton has led a delegation to India and we have begun to undo the damage of the Cold War where these two great democracies, the United States and India, did not have the best of relations. The Burton amendment is inappropriate almost any time; it is particularly inappropriate at this moment. We need to build a closer relationship with this largest free country in the world.

It is easy for us to run our democracy with the great wealth we have. India runs a democracy in excess of 1 billion people with some of the poorest people on this planet. We ought to be working to make a closer relationship between India and the United States, these two great leading democracies, and not drive a wedge between them. I urge rejection of this amendment and the concept that somehow India should be a whipping boy. India should be admired for its great successes in building a democracy in one of the largest and one of the poorest countries with some incredible economic development.

I want to commend the gentlewoman from California for her work in these last several days and all of her work here.

□ 1430

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Chairman, I am happy to yield 2 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER).

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the proposition of the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) that we not provide a 50 percent increase in aid to India. The fact is, we should be asking ourselves why, in a country that has a vibrant and growing economy, a country that is now moving forward on its own, is the United States continuing to give more and more foreign aid to a country like India.

Beyond that question, yes, let us concede that India is a democracy. We are proud that India has made some progress and stands in that region as a democratically-elected government. In Pakistan, I am afraid they have gone in the opposite direction.

But that does not mean that we should have a reflexive, a reflexive response to give India money, or just ignore the transgressions that the Indian government commits upon its own people. We should be encouraging this democracy to live up to the principles of human rights and freedom that they are violating, and not just try to cover it up.

The fact is that it is clear that there are severe violations of the rights of Christians, of Sikhs, of Muslims, that have been blessed by the Indian government, if not at the highest level, at the local level.

We must also recognize the continuing violence and terrorism on the subcontinent. Most of it flows from one fact, and that fact is that India has refused to allow a democratic election in

Kashmir in order to solve a problem that a long time ago happened in 1948.

The United Nations has mandated that they have an election and permit the people of Kashmir and Jammu to control their own destiny. Then this terrorism that we have heard about would disappear. What we have now instead is terrorism on the part of government itself, trying to terrorize the people of Kashmir and other dissidents in India into submission.

Terrorism is nothing more than an attack on unarmed people. We see that in Kashmir, unarmed people are being attacked by soldiers who are trying to push them into submission because they know in a free election the Kashmiris would vote not to be part of India.

Let us not give India aid anymore. If we do, let us mandate democratic change and human rights.

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE).

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Chairman, I think in this debate we also need to think of India in strategic terms, not taking the action that the gentleman has proposed, which I think would be harmful to the relationship with India.

In strengthening our ties with India, we have the great advantage of common values of democracy and rule of law. With that, we can push for the further reforms we want to see in India. But I think we should all remember that it is going to take engagement to push for those reforms.

I think a decade of reforms by several governments has moved India from socialism and spurred economic growth. There is a new generation of Indians who have taken advantage of this liberalization of their economic climate, and frankly, I think that we see reforms coming to the fore in India. I think these reforms on the human rights front and in terms of trade can frankly succeed there because they have the rule of law as an underpinning.

I think there is an effective bridge with the Indo-American community. I think for those reasons this would be counterproductive. I think that increasing U.S.-India cooperation is about maintaining a regional security balance. I would urge withdrawal of the amendment.

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Once again, the object of this piece of legislation is to get a document that does not have language that is either offensive to my philosophy or even to the will of the House.

The gentleman from Indiana in the essence of time has agreed to withdraw his amendment. That is the purpose. The language will not be in there.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CALLAHAN. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Chairman, I will end by saying that a few years ago, this amendment did pass. Since then the other side, the Indian lobby, has been very effective. I congratulate them on their effectiveness.

The problem still exists, though. I hope one day we will not even have to talk about it because they will have solved that problem.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Chairman. Once again Mr. BURTON seeks to treat our friends in India in an unfair and unjust manner. The House should reject this ageless exercise by our colleague. This, like all the others over the years, is an ill-advised amendment.

This Burton Amendment, which would prohibit development assistance to India, is a step in the wrong direction.

The Government of India has consistently been moving at a rapid pace to strengthen its ties with the United States and the World. The economic and diplomatic relationship between the United States, the world's oldest democracy, and India, the world's largest democracy, can only be hurt by successful passage of this Burton amendment. We can not and must not ignore the important progress and mutual benefit we have achieved in recent years.

The Government of India has been on a constant pace of change, for the last decade. Recent elections have featured world record voter turnout, essentially free of violence.

Mr. BURTON, as usual, claims that human rights violations are taking place in India. That claim is not supported by the facts. As Members of Congress, we must be very careful not to view the Government of India as being callous to these alleged human rights violations.

India has made great strides in their battle to bring its various and diverse interests together. Indeed, recent reports by the U.S. State Department declare that India continues to make notable and important progress with its human rights problems. It would be false and misdirected to say that India is not our friend.

U.S. business in India has grown at an astonishing rate of more than 50% a year over the past ten years, with the United States becoming India's largest trading partner and largest investor.

India has more than a half century of democratic self rule, and we must not break the ties that we have so diligently strived to assemble. We must strengthen those ties. That is why we must defeat this latest Burton amendment.

We must also note that Indian Americans have become an important and active part of the fabric of this Nation. Organized around the country, they too use their influence to press for continued improvement in their native land.

Reject this latest Burton Amendment! There is much too much at stake!

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to the amendment offered by the gentleman from Indiana, Mr. BURTON. This debate seems to be an unfortunate rite of summer here in the House. Every year we debate a Foreign Operation Appropriations bill and every year the gentleman from Indiana tries to cut funding for India, one of our most important allies. As in previous years, this attack should be rejected.

The amendment in question would eliminate programs aimed at improving India's development. As my colleagues know, U.S. aid to India is primarily used for food, family planning